

Today's News - Friday, April 15, 2011

- Glancey takes on Scruton's tirade against starchitects (see ANN April 12): "The philosopher should...keep schtum on subjects he knows little about."
- A green light for Saudi Arabia's mile-high Kingdom Tower (apparently not being designed by Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture - we found lots of names being bandied about, but no official word on who is designing it).
- Margate has high hopes that Chipperfield's Turner Contemporary (opening tomorrow) will save the seaside town from its "doeful destiny"; says he: it's "a nice shed facing the sea with good light that the people of Margate feel is theirs and others will come to see. Anything more than that is wrong."
- A new tower in Tel Aviv "highlights the benefits of one architectural firm overseeing the development of an entire complex" that broke ground in the '70s (no bowling alleys allowed).
- Hopefully some good news for migratory birds: possible LEED credits (and possible laws) to get architects and clients to consider avian-friendly designs.
- Coming up with a list of Top 10 buildings by women architects was not an easy task.
- King finds a moral in an architect designing a set for a ballet company and a once-lively atrium now a "monochromatic void": "Designing for the aha moment only lasts so long."
- Goldhagen on our dependence on architectural photography to understand buildings and how they may create aha moments but "reveal nothing of a building's functional failures."
- Davidson offers a (most readable!) history of NYC apartment life and what it reveals about us: "a tale of need alchemized into virtue" (+ lots of other tales to link to).
- Now hiring: a long list of Baltimore architecture and landscape architecture firms seeking fresh blood.
- Deadlines loom: RFQ: Seminole State College of Florida seeking architectural and engineering services for its Altamonte Campus master plan + deadline extended for 5th Annual R+D Awards.
- Weekend diversions:
- Kamin on Anne Tyng exhibit at the Graham Foundation: finally recognized on her own terms (and not just her affair with Kahn).
- Mies inspired Virginia Tech students; now their '09 Solar Decathlon-winning Lumenhaus spends the summer next to his Farnsworth House.
- In London, Merrick marvels at the newly-restored workshop of "the first shock-of-the-new modernist 140 years before the official birth of the movement" now on permanent view at the Science Museum (great slide show) + Glancey grooves on the "captivating grid" of Wim Crouwel's "extraordinary alphabets" on view at London's Design Museum.
- Ingels on his architecture comic book: "Our interest peaks when he introduces us to the term 'hedonistic sustainability'."
- Jenkins is more than a little fed up with England's "cult of the ruin" and tomes by "the latest priests of the cult to celebrate its mysteries."
- Kudos for the subtitle of Glaeser's "Triumph of the City" and for highlighting cities that are "in the midst of brain-power-fuelled turnarounds."
- Kudos for "Made in Russia: Unsung Icons of Soviet Design" that is "an excavation of the history of postwar Soviet stuff...the last thing you could call them is ugly."

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Roger Scruton is on shaky ground slating modern architecture: The philosopher should heed his admired Wittgenstein and keep schtum on subjects he knows little about. By Jonathan Glancey -- Daniel Libeskind; Frank Gehry; Richard Rogers; Norman Foster; Zaha Hadid; Peter Eisenman; Rem Koolhaas; Robert Adam; Quinlan Terry- Guardian (UK)

Saudi Arabia's mile-high Kingdom Tower gets green-lit: ...a staggering, record-shattering mile-high cloud-tickler...so big that it would take an elevator 12 minutes to reach the top...An 8.9-square-mile city will be built in the coastal area of Jeddah, which can accommodate 80,000 people...Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture [said] it is "definitely not working on a mile-high tower design"...- Wired UK

Turning the tide: How to rescue a seaside resort: Simon Tait meets the architect with big plans to revive the fortunes of Margate: Can David Chipperfield's art-gallery-on-the-beach [Turner Contemporary] rescue the community with the highest number of closed shops in the country, from its doeful destiny?- Independent (UK)

Transformers for snobs: Tel Aviv's Kiryat Atidim highlights the benefits of one architectural firm overseeing the development of an entire complex, in this case since ground broke in the 1970s...The design of the new Atidim Tower fits into this snobbish approach. By Noam Dvir -- Zarhy Architects- Ha'aretz (Israel)

Migratory birds run afoul of green buildings: Conservation groups urge building owners to adopt avian-friendly designs...USGBC is getting close to doing a pilot test to establish points for bird-friendly structures that could make them eligible for LEED accreditation...Getting architects to think about bird-friendly design can be difficult...Jeanne Gang's Aqua has won an award from People for Ethical Treatment of Animals. -- Chicago Bird Collision Monitors; American Bird Conservancy- Chicago Tribune

Top 10 Buildings: Women in Architecture: I thought this selection would essentially pick itself. Instead, what I discovered was that finding female-designed architecture, when excluding husband/wife teams, is extremely difficult... By Tom Mallory -- Zaha Hadid; Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA; Gae Aulenti; Sheila Kennedy/Kennedy & Violich Architecture/KVA Matx; Amanda Levete; Lacaton and Vassal; Maya Lin; Anna Heringer; Elke Delugan-Meissl; Lise Anne Couture/Asymptote; Caroline Bos/UNStudio [slide show essay]- Huffington Post

Christopher Haas creates set for Lines Ballet: I like his quest for what it says about our urban world, and how the buildings that lure us often have malleability in their genes...I also peeked into the atrium of the Hyatt Regency San Francisco [1974]...Alas, spectacle has given way to a monochromatic void...The moral? Designing for the aha moment only lasts so long. By John King -- HAAS Architecture- San Francisco Chronicle

Picturing Buildings: ...because of their indisputable materiality, because of their omnipresence...our dependence on photographs to understand and assess buildings that we do not ourselves see is significant...photographs and the photographers who take them unwittingly and willfully misrepresent...most architectural photographs reveal nothing of a building's functional failures... By Sarah Goldhagen- The New Republic

The New York Apartment: A Biography: Sardine Life: What a century and a half of piled-up housing reveals about us...a tale of need alchemized into virtue. By Justin Davidson -- Calvert Vaux (1857); Richard Morris Hunt (1870); Emery Roth; Gordon Bunshaft (1951); Costas Kondylis (2001); Frank Gehry; Christian de Portzamparc - New York Magazine

Baltimore architecture firms hiring 70+: ...include some landscape architecture firms... [links]- Baltimore Business Journal

Request For Qualifications/RFQ: Seminole State College of Florida is accepting sealed, hand delivered "Statements of Qualifications" for Professional Architectural and Engineering Services for Altamonte Campus Master Plan; deadline: May 10- Orlando Sentinel (Florida)

Deadline extended: Call for entries: 5th Annual R+D Awards: to honor innovative materials and systems at every scale; categories: Prototype, Production, Application; deadline: May 18- Architect Magazine

Architect Anne Tyng, on her own terms, at the Graham Foundation: ..."Anne Tyng: Inhabiting Geometry"...best-known for her work (and her affair) with Louis I. Kahn...she deserves to be recognized on her own terms...she "independently pioneered

habitable space-frame architecture." + "Louis Kahn to Anne Tyng: The Rome Letters 1953-1954" review. By Blair Kamin-Chicago Tribune

New Solar House Exhibit at Farnsworth House Through This Summer: Lumenhaus...one of the most cutting edge examples of an energy efficient home...winner of the 2009 International Solar Decathlon...Virginia Tech University students were inspired by Mies van der Rohe's design... [images]- Oswego Patch (Illinois)

The workshop that changed the world: "James Watt and our World"...it was in this attic workshop - restored and open to the public at London's Science Museum - that the inventor of the modern steam engine, presided over the industrial revolution...the first shock-of-the-new modernist 140 years before the official birth of the movement that gave us sanitation, skyscrapers... By Jay Merrick [slide show]- Independent (UK)

Wim Crouwel's extraordinary alphabets: The Dutch designer's iconic typography can be seen everywhere from posters to postage stamps – and, now, in a brilliant exhibition at the Design Museum...He is the first to say his work shouldn't be fetishised, but see if you can visit "Wim Crouwel: A Graphic Odyssey" and not be caught in his captivating grid. By Jonathan Glancey [images]- Guardian (UK)

Bjarke Ingels On His New Architecture Comic Book: 'Yes Is More': Our interest peaks when he introduces us to the term "hedonistic sustainability"...declares that it's far worse to be lazy than to be stupid. -- Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG- Huffington Post

This cult of the ruin renders England's landscape soulless. Better to rebuild: New tomes and TV shows exult in our wrecked castles and abbeys. Why do we not bring them back to useful life? No self-respecting coffee table is without a leg-buckling volume of ruination. The architectural writers Jeremy Musson and John Goodall are the latest priests of the cult to celebrate its mysteries. By Simon Jenkins - Guardian (UK)

Points worth making: One would think this obvious, but kudos for...Edward Glaeser for the subtitle of his new book, "Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Greener, Healthier, and Happier"...occupied with what makes certain cities perform better than others...in the midst of brain-power-fuelled turnarounds.- Toronto Star

Before (red) dawn: "Made in Russia: Unsung Icons of Soviet Design"...an excavation of the history of postwar Soviet stuff...predominantly from the era of "advanced socialism," when the Soviet people, no longer being shot at by Bolsheviks and Nazis, could relax a little bit...the last thing you could call them is ugly. These people were cool.- VSL/Very Short List



Rafael Viñoly Architects: The Ray and Dagmar Dolby Regeneration Medicine Building, UCSF, San Francisco

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